

Oklahoma Department of Mental Health
and Substance Abuse Services

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ODMHSAS RECEIVES \$2.4 MILLION TO EXPAND PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

The Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services has been awarded a 'Oklahoma Young Adults and Youth (O-YAY)' initiative grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The grant totals \$2.4 million over three years with the state receiving \$800,000 each year.

In the first year, this initiative will assist substance abuse treatment providers in Comanche, Garfield, Pittsburg and Wagoner Counties in the delivery of services for youth and young adults who are experiencing substance use disorders. The initiative also has targeted interventions that are aimed at serving the entire family system. Additional counties will be served in subsequent years. The goal is to improve treatment engagement and outcomes.

Substance abuse disorders often begin early in life. In fact, in Oklahoma use of alcohol and other substances often occurs before a thirteenth birthday. Early intervention and links to appropriate treatment services help prevent the progression of disease, addiction and additional serious consequences later in life. This population, however, is often difficult to reach.

The intent of the grant is to help providers in targeted areas to overcome the obstacles that hinder access to care for persons between the ages of 13 and 25. Key components of the grant will be creation of on-line training resources for use by substance abuse treatment providers, partnership with local universities and colleges to develop targeted training curriculums and support materials, and screening opportunities to link individuals to needed services.

Grant activities will begin October 1, 2015.

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